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ABSTRACT

The federally funded "New Adventure" program for children in the primary grades stresses individually determined language arts instruction coupled with positive behavioral principles. The first section of this document describes the program, presents the results of the first three years of its operation in a Tallahassee (Florida) elementary school, and explains the overall evaluation design. Objectives, teaching activities, evaluation methods, and findings are presented for five areas: oral language development, psycholinguistic development, reading development, selected advanced language arts skills development, and affective development. The second section discusses staff development activities, outlines two strategies for staff training, and notes probable costs involved in obtaining staff training and support services and in purchasing student materials for the program. A bibliography of related materials is included. (GW)

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NEW ADVENTURE ADOPTION INFORMATION

Introduction

The New Adventure program began in 1968 as a federally funded project for primary age children, grades K-3. Title III monies were used to plan, design and develop an individually determined language arts program. Procedures were studied for promoting positive pupil attitudes toward school and others along with good self-concepts.

History

August 1970-July 1973 - Research and development with pupils at W. T. Moore Elementary School, culminating in validation and approval by the nationally sponsored Joint Dissemination Review Panel.

Since 1973-74 the New Adventure program has functioned as a teacher training center.

PART I

Description of New Adventure program for pupils

Community - The community served is a part of the eastern section of Tallahassee, Florida, the state capital, with two universities and a population of approximately 100,000 people. The school "neighborhood" is a combination of densely populated suburban and sparsely populated rural areas. The housing ranges from exclusive residential to low value dwellings without plumbing, with average income of $5,000 per year.

School - New Adventure is housed at Walter T. Moore Elementary School, one of nineteen local elementary schools. It is a modern, open-space facility with seven large learning centers or pods, each with space for four classes, and a large common area.

Students - All pupils in Moore Elementary are involved in the project. When the project began about one-half were black pupils, a majority from rural homes. The remaining half were white pupils, the majority from middle income suburban families. With such a diverse population, many students came to school well prepared for academic and social success. Many others had very severe deficits in spoken language and experiential background, and lacked positive self concepts.

Program Components

The most innovative aspect of the project is "individually determined instruction" coupled with positive behavioral principles. Instruction is individually determined when the characteristics of each pupil play a major part in the selection of objectives, materials, procedures and time. Learning tasks are determined individually for each child; the child pursues these tasks in a variety of settings including independent study, partner study, and both small and large group instruction. This process is applied to all areas of language arts, i.e. reading, spelling, grammar, handwriting, creative writing and thinking skills. New Adventure is provided for all children normally assigned to W. T. Moore Elementary.

Goals, Objectives, Activities and Findings

The major goal of the program is to develop in young children basic language skills and knowledge, along with positive attitudes toward school. The project deals with a broad range of affective and cognitive learning. The student population was stable during the 3 years of research and development.

Student objectives, teaching strategies, evaluative devices and research findings in the five special areas are given below.

AREA I - Oral Language Development

Objective - Pupils will demonstrate increased vocabulary development as measured by continuous direct measurement of daily frequencies of pupil performance and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.

Teaching Activities - Diagnosis (individual assessment of each child's specific skills) is done daily to design activities appropriate for each child's needs and learning pace. These informal assessments are done by teacher observations in group and individual settings. Instruction involving a large variety of classroom activities includes lessons built around particular concepts using such resources as the Peabody Language Development Kit, study prints, tangible objects, Encyclopaedia Britannica's Language Experiences in Learning, Follet's The World of Language, and "process approach" strategies for building critical thinking skills.

Evaluation - The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test was given individually to all K-3 pupils.

Findings - In the third year of project operation, this test indicated a significant pupil growth ($t = 12.47$, $p < .001$) for total K-3 population. It is commonly expected that there will be one month growth for one month of treatment. The number of pupils making more than twelve months growth in mental age for seven months of treatment increased from 35% the first year of the project to 51% the

final year. The number of pupils making no gain decreased from 35% the first year to 18% the final year.

The mean improvement index was X 1.67, indicating a 67% increase in pupil accuracy for vocabulary development.

AREA 2 - Psycholinguistic Development

Objective - Language disadvantaged pupils will significantly increase their verbal learning ability as measured by continuous direct measurement of daily frequencies of pupil performance, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability, and Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children.

Teaching Activities - Project teachers used the ITPA and WISC tests to design screening techniques for assessing all pupils in the skills of psycholinguistics as defined by the work of Samuel Kirk. Those pupils showing deficits in any area are given specific remediation, often in small groups. In addition to these lessons for pupils with special needs, teachers conduct daily language activities with all pupils, teaching and reinforcing psycholinguistic skills. Activities from a variety of resources supplement teacher designed lessons.

Evaluation - The Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children were administered to language disadvantaged pupils.

Findings - A statistically significant gain occurred on the ITPA ($t = 6.26$, $p < .01$). Skills measured by this test are necessary for success in reading. Weaknesses in these skills often account for breakdowns after children start reading instruction. Heretofore, these skills have been taught in clinics or specific learning disabilities classes, seldom by regular classroom teachers.

Mean growth on the WISC was +1.25. While this gain is not statistically significant ($t = 0.92$, $p > .10$), failure to obtain a substantial change in either direction indicates an essentially normal growth rate. This is significant when considering the national trend of disadvantaged children regularly showing regression in measures of intelligence taken over several years of schooling.

The mean improvement index was X 1.32 which indicates a 32% increase in pupil accuracy in psycholinguistic skills.

AREA 3 - Reading Development

Objective - Pupils who do not have severe physical, emotional or neurological handicaps will achieve in reading at or above expected levels as measured by continuous direct measurement of daily frequencies of pupil performance and by the Gilmore Oral Reading Test and California Test of Mental Maturity.

Teaching Activities - Readiness to read is diagnosed in auditory and visual discrimination, psychomotor development,

social and emotional adjustments, psycholinguistic abilities, vocabulary development and concept development. This diagnosis is done by formal measures and informal assessments. Instruction is given to develop these skills before entering a child in formal reading. Such activities as telling about pictures, drawing stories, classifying objects, attaching word labels to objects, working with rhyming words, sequencing pictures, giving main ideas of stories heard, learning songs, working puzzles, copying letters, numbers and shapes are used.

Those students having reading readiness skills are involved in a formal program of reading development using basal readers. Instruction is based on the results of on-going diagnosis, using teacher observation of reading performance along with word lists, informal reading inventories, the Schonell Word Reading Test, a phonics inventory, and previously completed individual prescriptions. To accommodate as many different reading levels and learning styles as possible, teacher-led instruction is followed by reading prescriptions that are written for each pupil. Teachers use instructional materials and techniques from basal reading texts and individualized sources (such as the Barnell-Loft Specific Skills Series, the Lyons and Carnahan Phonics We Use, the SRA Reading Labs, the Dolch Puzzle Books, the Weekly Reader Phonics and Word Power). Such materials

permit teachers to develop reading activities that offer pupils a variety of learning activities. Activity centers are used to give children opportunities to apply their reading skills.

Evaluation - All 1-3 pupils were given the Gilmore Oral Reading Test. Only the accuracy score was used, as the test does not give a "pure" reading comprehension assessment. The reading expectancy formula by Albert Harris was used to determine each child's reading capability.

Findings - Pupil growth indicated by the Gilmore test was extremely significant ($t = 13.04$, $p < .001$). The first year of project 20.7% of the 1-3 pupils were not expected to read because of low mental age (below 6.0). This percentage was reduced to 10% by the third year. The number of pupils meeting their individual reading expectancy (reading performance commensurate with ability) increased from 37% of the 1-3 population at the beginning of the project to 57% at the end of the developmental years.

When the project began in September 1970, only 10% of the 1-3 population read on or above grade level on the Gilmore test. This was raised to 51% by May of 1973.

The mean improvement index was X 1.22 which indicates a 22% increase in pupil accuracy in reading.

AREA 4 - Selected Advanced Language Arts Skills Development

Objective - All third grade pupils will achieve at or above expected levels in spelling, mechanics of writing and

study skills as measured by continuous direct measurement of daily frequencies of pupil performance and by the California Test of Basic Skills.

Teaching Activities

Spelling - For diagnostic and grouping purposes, 2nd and 3rd grade teachers give screening tests which consist of words from various spelling tests and group pupils according to specific needs. The groups are flexible. Teachers then use the basal text approach supplemented as needed by individualized kits and language experience instruction.

Mechanics of Writing - Many opportunities to write compositions are provided. In the interest of encouraging creativity, teachers ignore grammatical and spelling errors in the first composition efforts and concentrate on the generation of ideas. As the pupil becomes more able to express his ideas freely on paper, increased attention is given to such mechanics as spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Ideas for student compositions come from discussions of pictures or topics connected with instructional units, introductory sentences provided by the teacher, discussions of feelings, follow-up of field trips and other motivational devices. Rules of grammar and punctuation are taught during teacher-led handwriting lessons.

Study Skills - Teachers work regularly on dictionary usage with those pupils who have acquired the prerequisite skills. Additional study skills are developed using the

SRA Graph and Picture Study Skills Kit and the SRA Map and Globe Skills Kit. Library skills are developed by the school media teacher working with small groups of pupils and special classroom projects individually selected by pupils.

Evaluation - To measure achievement in mechanics of writing, spelling, and study skills, the California Test of Basic Skills was given to all third grade pupils.

Findings - While not generating a statistical figure, the results of the CTBS were more than satisfactory. Seventy-three percent of the third grade pupils achieved at expected levels in study skills, 88% on mechanics of writing and 91% in spelling. In spelling, the mean improvement index was X 1.23, which indicates a 23% increase in pupil accuracy. No continuous frequencies were kept for mechanics of writing or study skills.

AREA 5 - Affective Development

Objective - Given a positive classroom atmosphere and an individually determined language arts instructional program, pupils will:

a. demonstrate on-task behavior 75% of the time while engaged in academic tasks as measured by trained observers;

b. significantly increase their self-directed academic behavior as measured by teacher observation;

c. make instructional choices appropriate to their abilities as measured by teacher observation;

d. demonstrate a positive attitude toward school as measured by the "How I Feel Attitude Inventory;" and

e. demonstrate acceptance for pupils who achieve at different levels than themselves as determined by teacher observation.

Teaching Activities - All pupil activities are planned to develop a positive classroom atmosphere in which learning may effectively and pleasantly take place.

Three techniques are used:

1. the consistent application of positive reinforcement techniques in line with research findings of behavioral psychology;

2. the consistent use of an individually determined language arts program, and

3. the consistent use of teacher modeling in respect to the stated objective for this specific area.

Evaluation - The objective for area 5 involves teacher observation in four of the five categories. These procedures are seen as appropriate in that they provide specific feedback to the project staff on the effectiveness of inservice training and the frequency of positive, on-task and error behaviors.

Findings

Sub-Area "a" (On-Task Behavior): A majority of project teachers have demonstrated a high level of positive reinforcement in their classrooms. Ten of twelve teachers demonstrated positive reinforcement in at least 80% of their interactions with students for two years (substantiated by a trained observer using a ten-second interval observation

schedule). According to Dr. Charles Madsen, Project Consultant, Florida State University, only 3% of 6,000 teachers observed nationally met 50% or higher.

Because of these skills on the part of teachers, project pupils have demonstrated a very high level of on-task behavior. On-task behavior has been as high as 87.6% (compared to 40-50% for more than 6,000 observed classrooms with untrained teachers).

Sub-Area "b" (Self-Directed Academic Behavior) and Sub-Area "c" (Instructional Choices): For evaluative charting purposes, these parts were grouped together. The mean improvement index for both was X 1.13, indicating a 13% increase in pupil accuracy.

Sub-Area "d" (Attitude Toward School): This segment of objective 5 was measured using the "How I Feel Attitude Inventory" for primary pupils. The inventory is built on a five-point scale (1 being most positive or happy, and 5 being most negative, or unhappy). Since the average pre-test rating per item was 1.8 (happy), there was little opportunity for change in an upward direction. This positive position was maintained with an average of 1.7 on the post-test.

A 2 X 2 contingency analysis (for differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students) was performed on the data and yielded a non-significant chi-square. Thus, the attitude toward school of the disadvantaged students did

not, on a statistical basis, change differentially from that of the advantaged students, a very encouraging outcome.

Sub-Area "e" (Acceptance of Others): No systematic data was collected in an effort to validate the attainment of this part of the objective for area 5. However, owing to the presence of a number of hearing impaired children (not part of the project population) in the school, ample opportunity existed to observe the interaction of the project pupils with these rather conspicuously impaired peers. On several occasions during the vists to Moore School by an outside evaluating team, instances were documented where project pupils interacted in a friendly and helpful way with the hearing impaired pupils. No occurrence of aggressive or belittling behavior was observed, although it would be naive to suppose that none occurred throughout the entire year.

Evaluation Design

In designing the over-all evaluation scheme, an experimental control design was considered. The possibility of locating a well-matched control group for the Southern, half rural, half small-city suburban, half white, half black population in an open-space setting in 1970 was, however, very unlikely. Nationally normed standardized tests were used on a pre-post basis instead. This was seen as appropriate

since the project was developmental rather than experimental in nature. The tests were normed with generally less disadvantaged pupils than project population. Comparison of project pupil growth to those norms would, therefore, yield a conservative measure of the effectiveness of intervention.

In addition, continuous direct measurement was used. This employed a Standard Behavior Chart measuring daily frequencies of behaviors to determine behavior change. The ratio of correct frequencies to incorrect frequencies is known as the improvement index.

The assessment instruments and techniques described in this section were administered, scored and analyzed in the following manner:

1. The Gilmore Oral Reading Test, Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability, Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children were administered and scored by faculty members and graduate students from the Florida State University Reading Clinic and from the Florida State University Department of Psychology. The results of the testing years one and two were analyzed and interpreted by the Florida State Department of Educational Research and Testing. In year three, the results were analyzed and interpreted by Precision Teaching of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

2. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test was administered and scored by faculty members and graduate students from the Florida State University Reading Clinic and by personnel trained by the New Adventure project staff. The results were analyzed and interpreted in the same manner as the assessment instruments in 1 above.

3. The California Test of Basic Skills was administered by New Adventure project teachers and scored by the New Adventure project staff. The results were analyzed and interpreted in the same manner as in 1 above.

4. Continuous direct measurement was employed during the third year of the project. Measurements were made by project teachers who were trained to 90% accuracy by Precision Teaching of Florida. Results of the measurements were analyzed and interpreted by Precision Teaching of Florida.

Program implementation calls for the use of a variety of commonly available materials. Among these are reading kits, programmed workbooks, skills workbooks, basal textbooks, spelling kits, study skills kits, puzzles, overhead transparencies, filmstrips, and equipment such as filmstrip projectors, overhead projectors, language masters, record players, listening stations, etc.

The key to this project's uniqueness lies in the instructional methodology employed by project teachers. By utilizing a variety of assessment instruments and techniques, the teachers have been able to diagnose conceptual, language arts and behavioral needs. Using the flexible facilities and available resource people (teachers, aides, and parent volunteers), teachers are able to provide varied learning tasks and activities to meet the wide range of pupil abilities and interests. Each teacher works with approximately 30 pupils.

The entire instructional process consists of a recurring cycle of pupil assessment - teacher planning - classroom

implementation back to pupil assessment and so on. All classroom components are effectively combined to create an educational atmosphere where each pupil can move and interact with others, make instructional choices related to materials and activities, experience success in academic tasks, and be treated as a person of worth.

Academic learning is motivated by use of behavioral techniques that continually reward desired behavior and reduce incidence of inappropriate behavior. The project's use of these techniques has been innovative in that regular classroom teachers have been able to employ them consistently over time. This capability has maintained positive student attitudes and has increased productivity (on-task learning behavior).

PART II

Two types of adoption are available:

(1) *STRATEGY I ADOPTIONS (Workshop Model)*

A 3-day training workshop for districts or regions wishing to train groups in New Adventure techniques.

(2) *STRATEGY II ADOPTIONS (High Impact Model)*

These adoptions usually involve the entire faculty from 1 school. High Impact Adopters send personnel to a Trainer/ Coordinator Seminar to gain techniques and materials for training their own faculties. On-going technical assistance is provided by Demonstration/Diffusion staff.

Demonstration Program

A demonstration program, housed in 24 kindergarten through 5th grade classrooms at the developmental site, is maintained to allow educators the opportunity of studying the program in action. One or two-day on-site observations may be made prior to adoption or during the implementation process. Visitation is highly recommended for adopters and may be scheduled from September until May.

Training

Adoption of the program involves training of administrators, supervisors, teachers, aides and other professional staff members.

Staff development activities include:

1. the theory and application of positive classroom management;
2. the use of standardized and informal diagnostic instruments, including the interpretation of results and identification of appropriate teaching strategies;
3. the techniques for screening and remediation of psycholinguistic skills;
4. appropriate record keeping and management techniques;
5. appropriate oral language activities;
6. the planning and maintenance of activity centers;
7. the analysis of available instructional materials in terms of purpose, scope, type of pupils, instructions and settings required, usage possibilities, and so forth;
8. the use of teacher aides and volunteers to maximize both instructional and non-instructional project efforts.

In line with the concept of competency based teacher education, teacher training modules are provided to achieve specific performance objectives. Each objective relates to a specific teaching competency necessary for replication of the New Adventure program. Pre and post assessments give feedback on each trainee's performance on each instructional module.

The five modules and their related terminal performance objectives are as follows:

1. Developing a Positive Classroom Environment (38 pages)

   Through a number of written questions, the teacher will demonstrate a knowledge of: the function of a positive classroom environment, the concept of positive reinforcement as used in New Adventure and techniques of

positive reinforcement, to the standards set in the answer key.

2. Techniques for Diagnosing Reading Abilities (62 pages)

   Given audio recordings of an elementary student, the teacher will: use the informal phonics inventory, the Schonell Word Reading Test, the informal reading inventory, and the Dolch Word List to diagnose the student's reading ability as reflected by each test, to the standards set in the answer key.

3. Individualizing Reading Instruction: The Use of Prescriptions (34 pages)

   Given diagnostic information about an elementary student, the teacher will provide a reading prescription for the student, to the standards set in the answer key.

4. The Design of Oral Language Instruction (40 pages)

   Given a number of written questions, the teacher will be able to: describe the function of oral language instruction, describe procedures for organizing oral language instruction, list different kinds of oral language instructional groups, and describe oral language presentation skills, to the standards set in the answer key.

5. Reducing Language Deficits: Psycholinguistic Remediation (36 pages)

   Given a description of an elementary student, the teacher will diagnose and suggest corrective activities for psycholinguistic weaknesses, to the standards set in the answer key.

Training provides guidance in the management and coordination of the total program. Learning theory and principles of sound early childhood education are addressed.

Training for Strategy I Adopters

Workshops dealing with major program components will be conducted, as the D/D schedule allows, by New Adventure to train adopters at their home site. Such areas as:

research implications, organization, management, and specific techniques of the validated program will be presented. Each Each participant will receive a copy of materials to be reproduced as needed in training others to use the program.

Training for Strategy II Adopters

High Impact Adopters designate a person to serve as the New Adventure Trainer/Coordinator. The Trainer/Coordination participates in a one-week Trainer/Coordinator Seminar at the Demonstration/Diffusion Center and then serves as a trainer for the total faculty and/or additional schools in the home district. The Trainer/Coordinator should be released from other duties to allow a regular time for assisting participating teachers in their classrooms. The Trainer/Coordinator should naturally be selected on the basis of professional standing and skills in working with adults as well as with children.

A comprehensive trainer's kit with ready-to-use activities for training teachers in each major area of program is also provided during the seminar. The kit is available only to participating Trainer/Coordinators and includes sections dealing with diagnosis, prescription, oral language, psycholinguistics, positive classroom management, group processes, and management/coordination.

It is preferable that a team of 2 or more leaders from each adopter school attend the Trainer/Coordinator

Seminar. This facilitates their progress when they return home and initiate installation.

One set of 5 teacher-training modules will be provided for each professional staff member participating in a High Impact Adoption.

A series of other staff development materials ('Adventure Pacs') will be sent periodically to High Impact Adopter schools to supplement initial training and to facilitate the implementation process. These staff development pacs will include such items as handouts for each teacher, transparencies, audio tapes, sample games and activities. The pacs will be designed in an 'Adult Activity Center' format to be used by the Trainer/Coordinator as working displays. Guides in leading faculty study sessions will be included. A newsletter giving information about the New Adventure "family", current research findings and tips for teachers will also be distributed.

The Demonstration/Diffusion staff is available by phone and individual correspondence to assist High Impact Adopters with problem solving and planning as the program is installed. This technical assistance is of an informal and friendly nature.

Probable Costs of Adoption

Two major areas of expense are involved in adopting the program: (1) training and support services from the Demonstration/Diffusion Center and (2) student materials and equipment, as needed.

(1) Training and Support

STRATEGY I ADOPTIONS (Workshop Model)

... a three-day training workshop for districts or regions wishing to train leadership groups in New Adventure techniques

cost -·$100.00 per day per consultant plus expenses
optional - visitations to D/D Center classrooms

STRATEGY II ADOPTIONS (High Impact Model)

... a one-week seminar at the D/D Center to train adopter personnel to serve as New Adventure Trainer/Coordinators (up to 3 people per adopter school)

... New Adventure Implementation Kit to guide staff development and program coordination

... 5 self-instructional training modules in basic program components - 1 set per professional staff member

... a series of staff development activity kits provided periodically during the school year ('Adventure Pacs')

... New Adventure newsletter

... technical assistance by phone or correspondence

... observation at D/D school as desired

fee - $500.00

additional expenses -travel and living expenses for participants attending Trainer/Coordinator Seminar in Tallahassee and optional visitations to D/D classrooms

(2) Student Materials and Equipment

Materials - A number of commonly used kinds of materials are needed, no specific commercial program. The program utilized basal text reading instruction, enriched by the addition of individualized approaches. Programmed materials, reading kits, learning games, and activity centers where children work on different reading tasks on varying levels are needed.

The following list of sample materials is provided to assist the potential adopter in determining the kind of materials needed. The list is provided for guidance only and does not imply formal endorsement. Additional information about specific materials is available from the Demonstration/ Diffusion Center.

Alpha I
Amos and His Friends Learn the Alphabet
Attribute Games
Barnell-Loft Specific Skills Series
Bill Martin's "Sounds of" books
Curriculum Press Phonics Workbooks
Diagnostic Reading Workbooks (Merrill)
Dolch Puzzle Books
Dolch Reading Books
Durrell Murphy Phonics Kit
Early Childhood Discovery Materials
Geo Blocks
Ginn's Learning Sounds and Letters
McCall Crabb Readers
New Practice Readers
Peabody Language Development Kit
Phonics We Use
Phonics We Use Games Kit
Sound Spelling Kits
Speech-To-Print
SRA Basic Reading Series
SRA Reading Labs
SRA Spelling Kits
Standard English
Study Prints
Talking Alphabet
Tangrams
Weekly Reader Practice Books

Start up costs for materials will naturally vary from school to school. From $0-$10 per pupil should be budgetted, depending upon the variety and quantity of individualized materials already in the school. Costs for operating beyond the first year involve only replacement of consumed materials. For example, the Demonstration/Diffusion program for pupils is supported entirely by normal local district funds, with the exception of those expenses directly related to the Demonstration/Diffusion adult training activities.

Equipment - The project uses equipment commonly available in schools. A new school would need to provide:

ear phone sets (1 per teacher)
cassette player (1 per teacher)
record player (1 per teacher)
filmstrip projector (1 per 2-3 teachers)
language master (1 per 2-3 teachers if possible)

Supplies to use with the equipment (tapes, records, filmstrips, A/V kits, etc.) will vary. Continued operation would involve replacement and expansion as desired.

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1. Program Objectives
2. Pupil Diagnosis
3. Prescriptive Teaching
4. Instructional Materials
5. Psycholinguistics
6. Management
7. Positive Reinforcement
8. Program Evaluation
9. Exportability
10. Project Findings
11. Training Program

Self-Instructional Training Modules:

Developing a Positive Classroom Environment.

Techniques for Diagnosing Reading Abilities.

Individualizing Reading Instruction: The Use of Prescriptions.

The Design of Oral Language Instruction.

Reducing Language Deficits: Psycholinguistic Remediation.

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